

BBC Charter Review Consultation

dcms

2 Cockspur St

London

SW1Y 5DH

22 Feb 04

Dear Sir/Madam,

I would just like to comment on 3 issues, only one of which is in response to a "key question" on your leaflet:

How should we pay for the BBC?

I don't support the licence fee because it is hassle for us (separate bill, another thing to change address on, remembering where we've kept it), there is lots of evasion (so the rest of us pay more), and it has to pay for a separate bureaucracy to run and enforce it. I don't understand the argument that this stops the government arm-twisting it (and that a direct grant wouldn't), since the govt. decides the amount of the licence fee.

I favour a govt. grant (arranged so it 'cannot' be withheld, and where the amount is independently set) combined with a special tax on TVs/etc.

Trying to do everything

I don't think the BBC should be competing on all fronts. In particular, most of its local radio stations have generally been very similar to each other and to commercial rivals. There is little point in having a BBC station do what could be done commercially instead. On the other hand BBC London is currently distinctive, so there is some point to it. Similarly with national stations: maybe R1 + R2 should be transferred to the private sector, but R4 would not likely survive, format unchanged, commercially, so must be retained.

Schedule changes

I have complained about this in the past, but they aren't interested. To not waste viewers' time there should be (agreed between all broadcasters) a set protocol for on-screen messages and audio announcements whenever there is a change from the advertised program, so we know what is going on, whether what we turned on for is coming on later, and when, without having to watch an entire ^{of unknown length} programme of no interest, in order to catch a fleeting announcement. This protocol would involve fixed times and durations after/before it was supposed to start.

Yours faithfully,
Ken Lyle